

start takes you far off course over time.

Over the last week, we have seen some conspicuous signs of bipartisan cooperation, including tonight, when the majority chose the road of cooperation to fix a gap in our national intelligence before we left for the August recess. Americans are grateful to the majority for joining us on this critical issue. Under the leadership of my friend the majority leader, Congress has acted on the sound principle that cooperation is a better recipe for success than confrontation and political theater. All of us should be glad about that.

We have seen that we can accomplish good things by working together and cooperating on legislation that Americans support. Politics certainly has its place, but it doesn't steer this ship, at least it shouldn't. There is simply too much to be done, and we have seen the results when it does.

So I would not offer a grade for this Congress. Others have already done that. But I will say that at the beginning of this session, I staked my party to a pledge: When faced with an urgent issue, we would act. When faced with a problem, we would seek solutions, not mere political advantage. That pledge still stands. We have seen what we can do. We have actually seen it tonight. And we have reason to hope we will see it still.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAQ

Mr. REID. Mr. President, last week the Iraqi people celebrated a very rare triumph, they won a soccer game. But their celebration had nothing to do with decreased violence, improved distribution of water, electricity or other basic necessities or, of course, political reconciliation. It was a soccer game. Iraqis were celebrating their victory in the Asian Cup soccer championship, as well they should. But even during this rare moment of joy, political realities could not be ignored. After his game-winning shot, team captain Younis Mahmoud told reporters he would not be returning to his home country, and he hoped that the American forces would leave Iraq quickly.

The setting, a great victory for the Iraqi soccer team. Their hero, their captain, says: I am not going home. I am not returning to Iraq, and I want the Americans out.

His words reflect the overwhelming sentiment of the Iraqi people whose hopes he carried on his shoulders. A recent poll showed that 70 percent of Iraqis think American forces make them less safe.

President Bush said 2 weeks ago, the war in Iraq has invited guests, and we would leave if asked. They are asking, we are not going.

Yesterday was a day without water in Baghdad. It was 115 degrees. There was no water because there was insufficient electric generation for water filtration and distribution of water. This was the sixth day in a row with virtually no water in the capital city, this huge metropolitan area, no water. People are drinking water when they can, but it is contaminated, and they are getting sick. Four dead American soldiers yesterday.

Meanwhile new evidence emerges by the day. Prime Minister al-Maliki is utterly failing to achieve the political reconciliation the country so desperately needs. Even worse, there is no evidence he is even trying.

Next month the administration will deliver a progress report on Iraq to us, the Congress of the United States. We, of course, will take that report seriously, but it has been clear for some time that this war and President Bush's troop escalation is a tragic failure. General Petraeus, whom we hear so much about, has said time and time again, the war cannot be won militarily. Many of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle have said for months that September would be the turning point, that in September, if meaningful progress has not been made, they will finally work with us to reach a responsible end to the war.

When we come back in September, the eyes of the world will be on those Republicans who made September their month to draw a line in the sand. I hope they would back their words up with action. Democrats have done everything we can do. All Democrats, we have done everything we can do. We need some help from the Republicans to change the course of that intractable civil war, costing the American people about \$350 to \$360 million every day. We need to finally take a stand together, Democrats and Republicans, to deliver a responsible end to the war that the American people demand and deserve and turn our military focus to the grave and growing threats we face throughout the world that have been ignored by this administration for far too long.

LEGISLATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, my friend, the distinguished Republican leader, came to the floor, talked about a number of things tonight. I wish to approach things in a little different direction. I wish to talk about what we have accomplished in these short 7 months. We have worked hard. We have worked long, hard hours, something that hasn't been done for a long time in this body. Let's talk about the bills we have sent to the President of the United States that we have passed.

Minimum wage. We hear a lot about minimum wage, but minimum wage is

not for kids flipping hamburgers at McDonald's. Sixty percent of the people who draw the minimum wage are women. For over half those women, that is the only money they get for themselves and their families.

I am glad we passed the minimum wage. After 10 years, we have given this legislation the attention it deserves. It is an issue that deals with women. It does. But also it is an issue that deals with people of color. The majority of the people who draw the minimum wage are people of color. We did the right thing. It is important legislation, and it is now the law.

A short time ago, we finished a vote on terrorism. On 9/11, it was an act of terror that killed over 3,000 Americans. President Bush went to Ground Zero on a number of occasions, but it was thought we should take a look at what really happened on 9/11. What could we do to better prepare for similar attacks? What went wrong? Why weren't we prepared?

So we asked—we Democrats asked—for months and months—that went well into more than 2 years—why don't we have an investigation to find out what went wrong? This was fought by the President. Finally, after an outcry from the survivors of the 9/11 victims and people all over this country, we were able to get a bipartisan commission to study 9/11. Even though the President opposed it, we finally were able to get this done.

They recommended we do certain things to make us safer. They made their recommendations, sent them to the White House, sent them to Congress, and we begged the President to implement these recommendations. They were not implemented. The 9/11 Commissioners came back and graded the President on how he had done—Fs and Ds on everything.

This Congress, in these short 7 months, has passed legislation that implements the 9/11 Commission recommendations. There was a signing ceremony today at the White House. That is now the law. It is going to make our country much safer. The problem is, it is 3 years behind schedule.

We, as Democrats, recognize we had elections last November. There was tremendous turnover. People never believed Democrats would take control of the Senate. There was some talk they would take over the House. The Senate was never thought to be a body that we would take over. We did.

Why did we take over the Senate? We have nine new Democratic Senators, one of whom is presiding over the Senate tonight. Those nine Democratic Senators campaigned on a number of issues. But the one issue they campaigned on all over this country is to do something about the culture of corruption in Washington.

Why were the nine new Democrats concerned? For the first time in 131 years, someone working in the White House was indicted. Scooter Libby has